

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1-49. (Cancelled)

50. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

splitting a first portion field and a second portion field of a frame of a video signal into a plurality of segments, a particular segment of the plurality of segments having no overlap with other segments of the plurality of segments and being adjacent to at least one of the plurality of segments; and

modulating at least one first field segment of the plurality of segments of the first field and at least one second field segment of the plurality of segments of the second field with auxiliary data by altering the pixel value of the plurality of pixels of the at least one first portion field segment and the second field segment, of the plurality of segments of the first portion,; and
altering the pixel value of the plurality of pixels of at least one second portion segment of the plurality of segments of the second portion based on the altering of the pixel value of the plurality of pixels of the at least one first portion segment of the first portion, the at least one second portion segment not including the at least one first portion segment,

wherein the altering of the pixel value of the first portion and the second portion modulates the video signal with auxiliary data

wherein at least one second corresponding field segment in the second field that corresponds to the first modulated field segment is not modulated, at least one first corresponding field segment in the first field that corresponds to the second modulated field segment is not modulated, and the plurality of pixels in a corresponding field segment of a field of the frame that correspond to the plurality of pixels in a particular modulated field segment of the other field of the frame have a different pixel value based on the modulating of the first field segment and the second field segment.

51-55. (Cancelled)

56. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:
optically obtaining a frame of a video signal from a display device; and
seeking and synchronizing to a vertical retrace period of the video signal; and
determining whether auxiliary data is present in the frame by performing a field comparison on a plurality of segments of a first field and a plurality of corresponding segments of a second field for the frame based on the seeking and synchronizing to the vertical retrace period.

57. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 56, wherein the field comparison includes:
subtracting intensity of the plurality of corresponding segments of the second field from the plurality of segments of the first field,
subtracting the intensity of the plurality of segments of the first field from the plurality of corresponding segments of the second field, or
combinations thereof.

58. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 57, further comprising:
decoding a logic one as the auxiliary data when a segment of the first field is encoded and a corresponding segment of the second field is not encoded; and
decoding a logic zero as the auxiliary data when the segment of the first field is not encoded and the corresponding segment of the second field is encoded.

59. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 57, further comprising:
decoding a logic one as the auxiliary data when a corresponding segment of the second field is encoded and a segment of the first field is not encoded; and
decoding a logic zero as the auxiliary data when the corresponding segment of the second field is not encoded and the segment of the first field is encoded.

60-71. (Cancelled)

72. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 57, further comprising: providing a benefit to a user based on the determining of the auxiliary data.

73. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 72, wherein the benefit is textual information, a prize, a coupon, a game, a special access privilege, or combinations thereof.

74-81. (Cancelled)

82. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 56 84, wherein seeking and synchronizing to the vertical retrace period of the video signal comprises:
seeking a first display section of a picture presented on a display device is black;
waiting a sufficient amount of time for a vertical refresh of the picture;
determining if a second display section of the picture presented on the display device is black;
looking beyond the first display section when the picture presented on the display device for the second display section is not black; and
locking on a vertical retrace period when the second display section is black.

83. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 82, further comprising releasing the lock on the vertical retrace period after a few seconds.

84-92. (Cancelled)

93. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50, wherein the plurality of segments is split into equal sized segments.

94. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 50, wherein the pixel value is intensity.

95. (Cancelled)

96. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 50, wherein a particular segment of the plurality of segments of the first ~~portion~~ field and the second ~~portion~~ field represents a bit of data.

97. (Cancelled)